

REMARKS

Examiners Matar and Le are thanked for the courtesies extended to Applicants' representative during a telephone interview conducted on May 23, 2003. During the interview, although Examiners Le and Matar agreed that Harlow does not teach "generating an outgoing call . . . by the service node," the Examiners maintained their position that the claims were obvious in view of Harlow, as articulated in the Office Action mailed March 3, 2003. The examiners suggested that the pending claims be amended to include additional limitations so overcome Harlow. In follow-up telephone conversations on June 2 and 3, 2003 between Applicants' representative and Examiner Le, proposed amended claims were discussed. An agreement has been reached that the proposed amended claims would be allowable subject to the Examiners' review of the specification for support of the new limitations and an updated search to be conducted by the Examiners in view of the amendment presented herein.

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendment and the following remarks.

Claims 1-40 were pending in this application. In the foregoing amended, claims 1-7, 9-12, 14-26, 28-29, 31-34, and 36-38 have been amended, claims 8, 13, 25, and 39-40 have been cancelled, and claims 41-45 have been added. Accordingly, claims 1-7, 9-12, 14-34, 36-38, and 41-45 will be pending herein upon entry of this Amendment. For the reasons stated below, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims pending in this application are in condition for allowance.

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In the Office Action mailed, claims 1-40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Harlow. To the extent this rejection might still be applied to claims presently pending in this application, it is respectfully traversed.

In each of the pending independent claims 1, 11, 21, 29, 31, and 41, new limitations have been added. For example, each of the pending independent claims includes limitations that require (1) determination of an operational status of a service node after an incoming call is detected at a first telephone, and (2) checking of busy/idle status of a second telephone associated with the first telephone if the service node is operational. Combinations of these limitations are not taught or suggested by the prior art of record. Support for these limitations can be found in several places of the present application. For example, support can be found at lines 3-17 on page 6, from line 4 on page 11 to line 6 on page 12, and on Figure 2a.

For at least the reasons stated above, Applicants believe that the § 103 rejection has been overcome and that all pending claims are now in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiners have any questions or determine that any further action is desirable to place this application in even better condition for issue, the Examiners are encouraged to telephone Applicants' undersigned representative at the number listed below.

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SHAW PITTMAN LLP
1650 Tysons Boulevard
McLean, VA 22102
Tel: 703-770-7900

Date: June 3, 2003

Respectfully submitted,

KNOERLE ET AL.

By: 

Poh C. Chua

Registration No. 44,615

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